

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff having a core and a hard coating comprising at least 90% crystalline erythritol by weight around the core ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the coating is a solidified melt.
2. (Original) A foodstuff according to claim 1 wherein the coating comprises at least 95% crystalline erythritol by weight.
3. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to claim 1 wherein the coating further comprises up to 10% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose or and isomalt.
4. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to claim 2 wherein the coating further comprises up to 5% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose or and isomalt.
5. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the thickness of the coating is 1.0mm or less.
6. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the thickness of the coating is 0.5mm or less.
7. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the coating is 50% or less by weight of the foodstuff.

8. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the coating is 30% or less by weight of the foodstuff.
9. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the core is a fragile core.
10. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the core is a soft fondant.
11. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the core comprises a polyol.
12. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the core comprises erythritol or xylitol.
13. (Currently Amended) A foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein the core contains between 75% and 85% erythritol or xylitol by weight, between 10% and 20% fat by weight and between 2% and 10% polyol syrup by weight.
14. (Currently Amended) A ~~confectionery product~~ foodstuff according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 wherein said foodstuff is a confectionery product.
15. (Original) A method of manufacturing a coated foodstuff having a core and a hard coating around the core comprising:
 - (a) forming a core;
 - (b) melting a coating material comprising at least 90% erythritol by weight;

- (c) applying the molten coating material around the core; and
- (d) solidifying the molten coating material to form a crystalline coating around the core.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 15 wherein step (c) comprises dipping the core in the molten coating material.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 15 wherein step (c) comprises spraying the molten coating material onto the core.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 15, ~~16 or 17~~ wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 90% erythritol by weight and up to 10% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 15, ~~16 or 17~~ wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 95% erythritol by weight.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 95% erythritol by weight and up to 5% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

21. (Original) A method of manufacturing a coated foodstuff having a fragile core and a hard coating around the core comprising:

- (a) forming a fragile core;
- (b) melting a coating material consisting substantially of one or more polyols;
- (c) applying the molten coating material around the fragile core; and
- (d) solidifying the molten coating material to form a crystalline coating around the fragile core.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 21 wherein step (c) comprises dipping the fragile core in the molten coating material.

23. (Original) A method according to claim 21 wherein step (c) comprises spraying the molten coating material onto the fragile core.

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 21, ~~22 or 23~~ wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 90% erythritol or mannitol by weight.

25. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 21 to 24 wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 95% erythritol or mannitol by weight.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 24 wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 90% erythritol or mannitol by weight and up to 10% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

27. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 25 wherein step (b) comprises melting a coating material comprising at least 95% erythritol or mannitol by weight and up to 5% by weight of at least one further polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

28. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any of claims~~ 20 to 27 claim 21 of manufacturing a coated foodstuff having a fragile core comprising a polyol wherein step (a) comprises forming a fragile core comprising a polyol.

29. (Original) A method according to claim 28 of manufacturing a coated foodstuff having a fragile core comprising erythritol or xylitol wherein step (a) comprises forming a fragile core comprising erythritol or xylitol.

30. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 21 to 29~~ claim 21 of manufacturing a coated soft fondant, marshmallow or expanded or aerated confectionery product comprising:

- (a) forming a soft fondant, marshmallow or expanded or aerated confectionery product;
- (b) melting a coating material comprising a polyol;
- (c) applying the molten coating material around the soft fondant, marshmallow or expanded or aerated confectionery product; and
- (d) solidifying the molten coating material to form a crystalline coating around the soft fondant, marshmallow or expanded or aerated confectionery product.

31. (Original) A method according to claim 30 of manufacturing a coated soft fondant wherein step (a) comprises forming a soft fondant comprising between 75% and 85% erythritol or xylitol by weight, between 10% and 20% fat by weight and between 2% and 10% polyol syrup by weight.

32. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 21 to 31 further comprising applying a further coating material to the coated core formed in step (d).

33. (Original) A method according to claim 32 comprising applying a sugar syrup to the coated core formed in step (d).

34. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff having a fragile core and a hard coating consisting substantially of one or more crystalline polyols around the core ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the coating is a solidified melt.

35. (Original) A coated foodstuff according to claim 34 wherein the core is a soft, fondant, marshmallow or expanded or aerated confectionery product.

36. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff according to claim 34 ~~or 35~~ wherein the coating comprises at least 90% crystalline erythritol or mannitol by weight.

37. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff according to claim 34, ~~35 or 36~~ wherein the coating comprises at least 95% crystalline erythritol or mannitol by weight.

38. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff according to claim 36 wherein the coating further comprises up to 10% by weight of a second polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

39. (Currently Amended) A coated foodstuff according to claim 37 wherein the coating further comprises up to 5% by weight of a second polyol, ~~being selected from the group consisting of~~ mannitol, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomaltulose ~~or~~ and isomalt.

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